

from Paris, had not yet been sent to their States. The Pope was then at Fontainebleau, and the Princes of Spain at Valensay. The Pope, however, was the first to be allowed to depart. Surely Bonaparte could never have thought of the service which the Pope might have rendered him at Rome, into which Murat's troops would never have dared to march had his Holiness been present there. With regard to the Spanish Princes Napoleon must have been greatly blinded by confidence in his fortune to have so long believed it possible to retain in France those useless trophies of defeated pretensions. It was, besides, so easy to get rid of the exiles of Valengay by sending them back to the place from whence they had been brought! It was so natural to recall with all speed the troops from the south when our armies in Germany began to be repulsed on the Rhine and even driven into France !¹ With the aid of these veteran troops Napoleon and his genius might have again turned the scale of fortune. But Napoleon reckoned on the nation, and he was wrong, for the nation was tired of him. His cause had ceased to be the cause of France.

The latter days of March were filled up by a series of calamities to Napoleon. On the 23d the rear-guard of the French army suffered considerable loss. To hear of attacks on his rear-guard must indeed have been mortifying to Napoleon, whose advanced guards had been so long accustomed to open the path of victory! Prince Schwartzemberg soon passed the Aube and marched upon Vitry and Chalons. Napoleon, counting on the possibility of defending Paris, threw himself, with the velocity of the eagle, on Schwartzemberg's rear by passing by Doulevant and Bar-sur-Aube. He pushed forward his advanced guards to Chaumont, and there saw the Austrian army make a movement which he took to be a retreat; but it was

¹ Though Napoleon undoubtedly suffered much from the loss of men left in the garrisons in Germany, etc., it must not be assumed that these were all veterans", though probably Dantzic and the Polish fortresses were largely occupied by men levied before the 1812 campaign; see, however, De Gonneville's description of his cuirassiers, who soon formed part of the garrison of Hamburg. The men had not any notion of the way to set about saddling their horses, and when mounted the whole regiment was unhorsed or dispersed through the fright of the horses when the men attempted to draw swords to return the compliment of a guard (*Gonneville*, vol. ii. pp. 99-101).